

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

2/24/2020 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked the Deputy Clerk to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms, Alderman Dylan Parker, Alderman Mark Poulos, Alderman Dave Geenen, Alderman Randy Hurt, Alderman James Spurgetis, and Alderwoman Jenni Swanson.

Staff: City Manager Randy Tweet, City Attorney Dave Morrison, Deputy Clerk Josh Adams, and other City staff.

Alderman Ivory D. Clark notified the City through Mr. Tweet that he would not be physically present for the meeting tonight due to health issues, and made a request to participate remotely per City ordinance.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to allow Alderman Clark to participate in the Council meeting remotely; Alderwoman Jenni Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 6-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Thoms led in the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Moment of Silence

Mayor Thoms asked for a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

5. Public Comment

Rock Island resident Michelle Royal came up front to speak to Council. Ms. Royal said she was at the previous study session regarding the possibility of opening a cannabis cafe. She said she offered Council the opportunity to visit her business to discuss the information on the cafe, but no one came. She discussed her research of specific Illinois laws regarding the carrying of cannabis. She expressed the concern of Iowa residents not having an option to use her potential business, and that they may be breaking the law regardless of their actions on the Illinois side. She listed the benefits of having a cafe in the City, as it will bring money, attention, and tax dollars in. She reminded Council of past administrative decisions made by the City that may have been a mistake.

She directed a comment to Mayor Thoms, as they had an issue on television the previous week, and asked for a public apology. She stated she was a transgender woman and has been out for six years, and has used the associated pronouns as well. She said this is a learning point for remembering to use correct pronouns, and she acknowledged Mayor Thoms did publicly apologize via Facebook. Mayor Thoms said he publicly apologizes for his mistake and will work to be better. Ms. Royal said she encouraged everyone to become familiar with the pronouns of transgendered individuals, and to ask if they do not know. She again extended the offer for anyone wanting to learn more about the possible cafe to visit.

Alderman Parker followed up by saying since the previous study session, lounges or cafes have opened up both in DeKalb and Springfield. He reiterated that the City would then not be the first in the state to adopt such a business.

Brent Smith, who spoke on behalf of Brandon Albertson, owner of Brandon's Pub and Grill of Rock Island, came up front. He presented the additional paperwork that was not in the agenda packet, and commented on the recent noise complaint they received, as well as the measures they have taken to solve the issue.

6. Minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion massed on a 7-0-0 voice vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

7. Minutes of the Executive Session of February 10, 2020.

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

VOTE:

Motion massed on a 7-0-0 voice vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

8. Update Rock Island by Mayor Thoms

2020 Census - The Census is 36 days away and your Complete Count Committee has been actively meeting and planning for a fair and accurate count in Rock Island. Data collected from the Census is vital information for your community leaders to make decisions like transportation, targeted community services, business development, and public safety. A fair and accurate count will not only protect Rock Island's representation in Congress, but it will ensure that the City, schools, and nonprofits receive their fair share of federal dollars that will impact them for the next ten years. In mid-March, homes across the city will be receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. Community organizations have volunteered to be community kiosks for residents who need assistance in filling out the census online. A directory listing locations and hours can be found at [www.wecountqc.org](http://www.wecountqc.org). Events are being planned throughout the city, and Rock Island County in March and April to raise awareness and motivate every household to respond to the Census. Stay tuned! The Census only takes ten minutes to fill out. It's easy, quick, and 100% confidential. Don't miss your chance to participate in the nation's largest peacekeeping mobilization, respond to the Census and be counted.

February is Library Lover's Month - You can pay the library love forward with Have a Heart for Reading trees at our Downtown and Southwest locations. To participate, just pick a heart from the tree and bring it up to the service desk through February 29. You may choose to pay part of a balance to make this a community effort, or all - it's your choice. Each heart contains an account balance for an anonymous youngster who has used their library card in the past, but are currently not able to check out items due to having an account balance over \$5. When the balance is under \$5, the child will get a second chance at using their library card.

9. Mayor Thoms will close the regular meeting and open a Public Hearing regarding the First National Bank Landmarking Appeal.

Mayor Thoms closed the regular meeting and called for a Public Hearing. He asked for anyone opposed to the appeal to speak. Linda Anderson, speaking on behalf of Dr. Leslie Orion of the Rock Island Preservation Commission. Ms. Anderson asked Council to affirm the Commission's designation of First National Bank as a landmark, as it meets the four criteria for a local landmark designation. She said the building is a significant part of the historic heritage of the community, and provided a brief history from its inception in 1852. She described the features of the building that make the building stand out, and the other buildings in the City that were designed by the same individuals. She discussed the impact of the possible National Register designation on the Downtown area. She finished by asking the Council to affirm the local landmark designation on behalf of the Preservation Society.

Mayor Thoms asked the owner of record to come forward. Jerry Lyphout, National Secretary and Chief Operations Officer of Modern Woodmen of America, thanked the Council for allowing him to appeal the Preservation Commission's decision to designate the building in question as a historic landmark. He discussed the steps Modern Woodmen has taken with the building to assess the renovation and restoration of the building, including architectural firm Shive Hattery to assist in determining the historic significance with the building. He said the decision was made after considering those factors to tear the building down, with the intention of building on the property site with tenant space. If their arrangement with a third party does not succeed, the goal would be to have a parking lot on the property until a future building was planned. Mr. Lyphout said Modern Woodmen would like to expand, but they are limited in scope aside from the property in question. He noted that with many fraternal organizations failing, the goal through mergers and acquisitions would be to grow as a business and expand within the city of Rock Island.

Diane Oestreich, a representative from the Preservation Commission came forward in opposition. She asked Council to consider waiting to make the decision until a plan is in place to possibly use the building instead of destruction. She contended that the estimate of replacing

items mentioned by Mr. Lyphout were standard maintenance after fifty years. She provided additional information about her knowledge of what has already taken place for demolition within the building, as well as pointing out the information in the agenda regarding the significance of it. She again encouraged Council to defer the decision, as Modern Woodmen could come back for a certificate of economic hardship, and there had only been speculation regarding the future of the site with no current plan. She pointed out that the City has always been very good to Modern Woodmen.

Ms. Anderson returned to the front for a closing statement. She thanked Staff and Council members for supporting the Commission's measure when the building was up for the National Register for Historic Places. She discussed the value of the building to the City and the value of the City's historical assets as well as the value of keeping historic items alive in the City.

Mr. Lyphout returned to the front for a closing statement. He thanked Council and advised them that Valley Construction also does new construction as well as demolition. He said the building was intended to last for decades and not centuries, and if the building had been on their regular campus, changes or demolition wouldn't be a question. He finished by saying the building in question is no longer sound based on what is needed today.

Alderman Parker asked Mr. Lyphout what the need is for it to be done now, and if there was anything that would prohibit an agreement with new tenants from going forward. Mr. Lyphout said it costs \$300,000 a year to keep the building up as is. He added that the third party they have had discussions with has serious intent, and in order to move forward with that party, Modern Woodmen needs to move forward with the building as well. Alderman Parker said he wanted Mr. Lyphout to understand the concern of having the space turned into a parking lot, as well as asking citizens to trust that new construction would occur. He said he hopes the location will be a positive tool for economic development, and even with the building being noted for landmark approval, he will trust Modern Woodmen to work together with the City to make sure a building will be on the site in the future.

Mr. Lyphout said Modern Woodmen will continue to collaborate with the City, and they want to see the City thrive. He said once a building is there, the City will benefit more than it currently does, as a new building will be worth more, and thus will bring greater tax revenue. He said the current assessed value of the building is \$1.8 million, and a new building would in part be worth at least \$28 million. He said Modern Woodmen has committed to not put any more money into that building and if the building is not taken down, it will be a boarded facility and the value will continue to decline.

Mayor Thoms closed the public meeting and reopened the regular meeting.

#### MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to overturn the Historic Preservation Commission's designation of the First National Bank Building at 100 17th Street as a local landmark under the Historic Preservation Ordinance; Alderman Poulos seconded.

Alderman Spurgetis commented that there are two respected entities with different viewpoints competing for the same property's future. He said he does not want the vote to reflect poorly on either party.

#### VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, and Parker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

10. Proclamation declaring March 1, 2020 through March 7, 2020 as Women In Construction.

Deputy Clerk Josh Adams read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms presented the proclamation to Nicole Moreno and Julie Gelaude and posed for photos with both.

11. Claims

- a. Report from the Information Technology Department regarding payment in the amount of \$18,648.51 to the Rock Island County Sheriff's Office for the City's share of the OSSI RMS Software annual maintenance.
- b. Report from the Information Technology Department regarding payment in the amount of \$30,957.26 for renewal of the Harris-Govern maintenance agreement for April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.
- c. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$29,349.52 to McClintock Trucking & Excavating, Inc. of Colona, IL for services provided at five City locations as part of the Sewer Lateral Repair Program, Project 2564.
- d. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$13,650.31 to McClintock Trucking & Excavating, Inc. of Colona, IL for services provided at 2218 15 1/2 Street and 525 30th Street as part of the Water Service Repair Program, Project 2526.
- e. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$14,273.00 to Gasvoda & Associates, Calumet City, IL for the emergency purchase of two samplers.
- f. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$20,244.30 to Crawford Company of Rock Island, IL for a sewer lateral repair at 2810 45th Street, in accordance with the City's Sewer Lateral Repair Program.
- g. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$14,572.13 to Crawford Company of Rock Island, IL for emergency sewer main repair at 1320 38th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to accept the reports and authorize payment as recommended for Claims items a through g; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- h. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$15,733.00 to Langman Construction for emergency water main repair on 24th Street and 23rd Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to accept the report and authorize payment as recommended for Claims item h; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 6-0-0 vote. Aye: Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Alderman Parker recused himself due to the nature of his employment.

12. Claims for the week of February 7, 2020 through February 14, 2020 in the amount of \$615,008.57, for February 15, 2020 through February 20, 2020 in the amount of \$324,928.21; and payroll for the week of January 27, 2020 through February 9, 2020.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to allow the claims and payroll; Alderman Paker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

13. ACH Payments for the month of January 2020 in the amount of \$2,956,229.12.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to approve the ACH payments; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

14. Purchase Card Claims for the period of December 27, 2019 through January 27, 2020 in the amount of \$58,701.89.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve the purchase card claims; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

15. Report from the Public Works Department regarding a request by the Rock Island County Sheriff's Office to install emergency services communication equipment on the City's 38th Street and 31st Avenue water tower as part of a 20-year lease agreement.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve the request and direct the City Manager to execute the agreement subject to minor attorney modifications; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

16. Report from the Public Works Department regarding an extension of the lease agreement with Sprint for the placement of cellular antennas on the 24th Street and 31st Avenue water tower.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the request and direct the City Manager to execute the agreement subject to minor attorney modifications; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

17. Report from the Public Works Department regarding the Energy Performance Contract with Johnson Controls Inc. of Moline, IL in the amount of \$13,852,189.00.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the contract and direct the City Manager to execute the agreement subject to minor attorney modification; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

Alderman Poulos asked City Manager Randy Tweet for assurances that taxes would not be increased next year as a result of this contract. Mr. Tweet replied that the money for this has already been expended or is expected to be expended. He added that part of the funding will come from utility bills, which will be lowered as a result of the project, as well as service and maintenance contracts that will no longer be needed due to equipment upgrades. Also, funding will come from the Capital Improvement Project budget and expected future CIP budgets, which represent allocations from sewer and water bills as well as gaming funds. Mr. Tweet said the savings on maintenance staff could not be quantified, as capturing the time and manpower needed to repair will allow those services to be allocated elsewhere.

Alderman Spurgetis asked about financing for the project, and if the City will borrow money for the project. Finance Director Stephanie Masson discussed the options for financing. She said one option is a tax exempt lease purchase, and another is the issuance of bonds, which would yield a lower cost of borrowing over time. She said the latter option is likely the direction to go if the vote passes, and the approximate amount would be \$13 million, and the payments would come from the savings identified by the other expenditures that will not be spent as a result of the project. Alderman Spurgetis asked about the actual dollars for the project, as well as the project contingency of \$200,000 listed. Ms. Masson explained the disbursement of funds, including a \$6.9 million initial payment, with the remainder to be dispersed during the project. Alderman Spurgetis questioned the wording of the contract regarding a lump sum payment. Ms. Masson said this change can be looked at under minor attorney modifications. Ms. Masson said the contingency fund would cover unexpected repairs that may be needed in those projects.

Alderman Parker said he is excited for the project, and reviewed the changes that will result. He asked when the last repair or replacement of HVAC occurred in City Hall. Mr. Tweet replied that it was likely since the building was erected. Alderman Parker reiterated the savings and benefits of the project, which include environmental aspects and historical preservation efforts.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

18. Report from the Finance Department regarding an adjustment to the CY 2020 Budget.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to accept the report and approve the budget adjustment; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

19. An update to the Urban Chicken Ordinance of 2016.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to pass the ordinance and refer to the City Attorney for the ordinance; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

Alderman Parker asked Planning and Redevelopment Administrator Miles Brainard to clarify what was updated. Mr. Brainard said the original ordinance had measures that kept some residents from fairly operating under the terms. He added that the update is intended to make the document easier to understand, make it easier for residents to take advantage of the ordinance, and provide the opportunity to ask for an exemption. Residents can appeal staff's decision through the Planning Commission to approve the application with a special exemption. Alderman Parker said he is currently an applicant, and asked if it would be ok for him to vote on the agenda item. City Attorney Dave Morrison confirmed that he would be ok to vote.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

20. An Ordinance establishing Urban Beekeeping for City residents.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to pass the ordinance and refer to the City Attorney for the ordinance; Alderman Hurt seconded.

Alderwoman Swanson expressed concern for those that have allergies to bee stings, and whether or not this measure would protect these citizens in any way. Mr. Brainard said other municipalities have entertained the same type of question, but that the honeybee is bred to be docile. He said the beekeeping practice already takes place within the City, but the purpose of the ordinance is to standardize the way residents should keep bees, which would reduce conflicts.

VOTE:



Motion passed on a 6-1-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, and Spurgetis. Nay: Swanson. Absent: None.

21. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding a request from Justin Farley to apply for a Special Use Permit to operate a music studio and public event facility at 4401 7th Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to allow the application of the special use permit as recommended; Alderman Parker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

22. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding a request from Michael Whiteside to operate a bar at 3737 14th Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to allow the application of the special use permit as recommended; Alderman Geenen seconded.

Alderman Poulos asked if the zoning would be changed for this particular lot; Mayor Thoms said no in the event that if the property changed hands, the Special Use Permit could be altered. Alderman Parker clarified that this motion is only to allow Mr. Whiteside to apply for the Special Use Permit.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

23. Report from the Traffic Engineering Committee regarding the request to remove the handicapped parking space in front of 612 6th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Clark moved to approve the request as recommended and direct the City Attorney to prepare the necessary paperwork; Alderman Geenen seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

24. Report from the Traffic Engineering Committee regarding the request to remove the handicapped parking space in front of 546 22nd Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to approve the request as recommended and direct the City Attorney to prepare the necessary paperwork; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

25. Report from the Mayor regarding the reappointment of Shellee Showalter to the Fire Pension Board.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the reappointment as recommended; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 voice vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

26. Other Business

Mayor Thoms read a letter from City residents Jo and George Jameson regarding an appreciation of Rock Island Police Officer Mendoza, Fire Chief Jeff Yerkey, and an unnamed firefighter for their assistance in helping them in their home on December 11, 2019.

Alderwoman Swanson said she spoke to a Moline alderperson who was involved in an accident at Augustana College. She added that the Rock Island Police responded within ten minutes, and the Moline alderperson was impressed with their efficiency and professionalism.

Alderman Clark thanked the Council for allowing him to be a part of the Council meeting, and let everyone know that he may be away for a time.

27. Motion to Adjourn

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to adjourn the meeting; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed with a 7-0-0 voice vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

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Josh Adams, Deputy Clerk